2: Elwin E-5 (1935-1942) 1947 AW32 Gond AW32
Muria

pipes. These are lit with little bits of glowing coal picked from the fire, and when half-smoked or not in use are generally kept tucked into the turban or hidden in a hole in the ghotul wall.

But the chelik do not rely only on the tobacco supplied them in the ghotul. Any enterprising boy has tucked into his loin-cloth or hanging (sometimes with a bunch of bells or cowries) at his waist a specially-made tobacco-pouch. These *gota* are, as a glance at the illustrations in Figs. 82-4, 93-5, 99, 103-4, and 109-14 will show, elaborate and varied. They are of every size and shape. One is like a fish, another carved like a wheel, a third resembles a mango. Some are of garud, moda or koraya wood, others are cut from the kernel of a fruit, a few are of brass. The stoppers are fitted tightly with a little lac. Some are covered with the testes of a goat or sambhar. Most are elaborately carved.

Many of the *gota*-pouches are named. There is the *dudong-gota*, round as a girl's breast; the *chakka-gota* (Fig. 77), a beautifully carved wheel; the *kemul*, or tortoise pouch (Fig. 79) with its elaborate designs; the charming *marka-batta-gota* (Fig. 112) shaped like a mango; the *kalări-gota* (Fig. 83); the *min-hĭp-gota*, with its decoration of fish bones; the *tumur-gota*, whose carving resembles the flowers of the ebony tree; the *girne* or lizard *gota* (Fig. 82); and the *damera-ăching-singăr gota* (Fig. 110) with its elaborate silver decorations. Some of the *gota* have a deliberately sexual purpose; the *pudo-gota* (Figs. 94 and 99) has small representations of the vagina carved on it and the *dudo-muri* (Fig. 101) has marks that are supposed to resemble the pimples round the nipples of a woman's breast. The chelik show these to girls to excite them. But, indeed, as I show in another chapter, to ask for tobacco is itself a polite way of asking a girl for sexual congress.

The Muria grow tobacco in specially fenced gardens near their houses and sometimes in enclosures made on the banks of stream or river. When it is ready, it is cut and allowed to dry in the garden. Then it is placed between layers of kodon straw 'which turns it red in a few days'. After this it is dried again, this time on the roof of the house, and finally tied up in bundles with home-made string.

VI. The Sleeping-mat

The *gik* or *mansi*-mat is an important piece of ghotul furniture. When a boy joins the ghotul for the first time he is expected to bring a mat which is usually made for him by his mother or an aunt. Later on, especially in the *jodidăr* ghotul, a girl ought always to make a mat for her special chelik, but elsewhere the mats seem to be made by a boy's mother, sister or some other female relative. At a marriage a new mat is usually presented to the bridegroom.

The mat is not difficult to make. A rectangle is marked out and pegs driven into the ground at its four corners. Bits of bamboo are tied between the pegs at opposite ends of the rectangle and a dozen or more strings of hemp or grass are tied from one end to the other so as to form the warp. Before they are attached, they are threaded through the holes of the *ăch*, a wooden instrument illustrated in Fig. 96 which is used to beat the grass into place. The woman sits down with the *ăch* before her and threads bits of reed or grass over and under the strings. After she has threaded two or three she sprinkles them with water and pulls the *ăch* sharply towards her several times, thus pressing the grass into position. This is done over and over again until finally the mat is complete.